

8 August 1952

Memorandum for: Deputy Director/Intelligence

Subject: Joint Congressional Committee  
on Atomic Energy.

1. In response to your request as to who will succeed the late Brien McMahon as Chairman of the Joint Congressional Committee on Atomic Energy, this is to report that there is no definite answer at this time, but the alternatives are listed below:

a. It is felt that while members of the House would like to rotate the chairmanship, in all probability the chairmanship will remain in the Senate;

b. If the Senate goes Republican, the chairmanship will revert to Senator Hickenlooper of Iowa, who was the first Committee Chairman;

c. If the presidency and the Congress is Democratic, the ranking Senator is Russell of Georgia, who is Chairman of the Senate Armed Services Committee. He has never shown much interest in the work of the Joint Committee, and in all probability he will retain his Armed Services chairmanship and not assume that of the Joint Committee.

d. The next ranking Democrat is Edwin Johnson of Colorado, who is Chairman of the Senate Interstate and Foreign Commerce Committee. It is believed that he, also, would prefer to remain Chairman of his present Committee rather than to assume that of the Joint Committee. In addition, after his serious security breach on a television show regarding the development of the hydrogen bomb, he has taken less participation in the Joint Committee work;

e. The next ranking Democrat is Senator Clinton Anderson, of New Mexico, who is in poor health. He has

been subject to heart trouble and diabetes, and I understand he is about to enter the hospital again. It is, therefore, a question whether his health will permit active leadership of the Committee;

f. The next Democratic Senator on the Committee, Lyndon Johnson of Texas, has just been appointed to succeed retiring Senator Connally, and it is questionable whether someone with no Joint Committee experience, although a popular member of the Senate, would succeed to the chairmanship;

g. If Russell, Johnson of Colorado, and Anderson were not available for the chairmanship, the Committee might then turn to Congressman Carl Durham of North Carolina, the present Vice Chairman;

h. If the presidency and the House are Republican and the Senate is Democratic, there might be an agreement to turn the chairmanship over to the ranking Republican House member of the Joint Committee, Sterling Cole of New York. He is known to be an extremely hardworking and intelligent member, and extremely pro-Navy in his orientation on Armed Services matters.

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